

Better Late than Never

by Old Beginning New Ending

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Better Late than Never

And this is pretty late, but as the title suggests? And somehow it at least went from short to long? Haha

\* \* \*

<p><strong>1. Butterflies<strong>

So what if his palms sweat and he stutters when he's nervous? He babbles like an idiot, or so Uncle North says half the time, but that's okay because that cute and shy boy from class gives him a confused smile that makes him all the more adorable.

That's okay because after months of trying to get the boy's attention through jokes and jibes and through pranks that got everyone else laughing but the one who he had been dying to see smile, grin, or chuckle, actually gave him a chance after one failure of a display of courting with no one but an empty classroom and the sun spilling from the window as the witness to the unsure and unconfident, "So uh, do you li-like movies? We ah, could go sometime" me and you that is, err you and I or is it ah, so, Saturday?"

Because he finally got the nerve to ask out that quiet boy in the back of class who daydreams from the open class window, whose freckles seemed to explode on his face like galaxies marked on his skin and green eyes like the end of June, who blinked and turned a whole shade pinker than he had ever seen him, and who mumbled out a shaky "S-sure" before giving him the teeniest of grins and Jack thought his heart would give out from happiness.

Jackson Overland Frost was thirteen when he met the love of his

lifeâ€"fourteen in three months when he asked Hamish "Hiccup" H. Haddock the Third on their first date.

## **\*\*2. Disney Magic\*\***

There were many things wrong with this scenario:

1: Hiccup was in a dress. 2: He was trapped in a castle. 3: He could hear Toothless outside, rampaging like he was battling an overgrown eel. 4: He was in a dress. 5: He was quite certain they were extensions in the beginningâ€|but now he was starting to believe that the curly locks that slid down past his shoulders actually were \_his hair\_. Oh, and 6: HE WAS IN A DRESS. AND WEARING A TIARA.

Now that was fine and dandyâ€|he could just \_take off\_ the dressâ€|except he really didn't feel like running through an unknown castle in nothing but his skivvies. He could just call Toothless and bust out of this strange pseudo-prison (really? The highest tower in the castle?)â€|if it weren't for \_them.\_

"Well I just don't understand!" Flora huffed as she flipped through a rather large book. "How did I mix up the spells?"

"Uhmâ€|can I just pleaseâ€" " Hiccup started weakly.

"Oh no, ya don't," chided Merryweather. "You are \_not\_ going out there."

"But that's \_my \_dragon!" the teen blurted.

"Oh, Auroraâ€|. " Fauna sighed, patting the teen's hand with evident sympathy. "It'll be all right, dear. We've done all we can to aid Prince Phillipâ€" "

"My name is Hiccup," the teen drawled, crossing his arms and plopping down on the bed.

"Yeah, and my name isn't Phillip," came a voice from the door. "It's Jack." Ohâ€|well it seemed like the fighting had stopped. Well, the battle outside, anyways. Wait a secondâ€|

"What have you done to Toothless?!" Why yes, Hiccup did storm over there while lifting his skirt so he wouldn't trip? So what? It certainly startled the other guy.

"Toothless? You mean your dragon over there?" After a fervent nod, this "Jack" person shrugged. "He'll be fine. The Sandman's Dreamdust'll wear off." Ice blue eyes seemed to give him a once-over before smirking. "So, are you like the princess of this castle or something?"

Hiccup fumed; just who does this guy think he is? However, before he could even open his mouth, Flora beat him to the punch: "Why yes sheâ€"

"\_He\_," Hiccup venomously supplied.

â€"is!" And the pink lady with the mosquito-wings had the nerve to clasp her hands in joy like the two of them were the most romantic thing she had ever seen.

Hiccup turned to Jack with a tired expression. "Please tell me that you're not delusional too."

The boy with the frost-colored hair laughed. "Nah, I'm perfectly sane."

The brunet let out a sigh of relief. "Good."

And then there was an arm that snaked around his waist and Hiccup right then would rather face a Monstrous Nightmare gone berserk head-on than turn to that obnoxious face as he said, "But you know, for a boy, you look damn good in a dress."

It was such a blessing to have a dragon as a best friend—especially a dragon with impeccable timing and one that knew how to deal with frosty-haired perverts and troublesome fairies.

**\*\*3. Somewhere in Between\*\***

It was when the days picked up a heavy chill that rattled the bones and swept the leaves off of trees, the first formations of frost on the window pane, or when the trees slipped on their final robe of the year—an earthy shade of brown before it shed its leaves altogether in its death month.

It was the scent of pine in the air and the crisp breezes that followed, of life-giving rain and storms that cry out with the grief of life to let its inhabitants know that they are not alone and nature shares in their pain. It was lovely little flowers of frost that blossomed on mysterious autumn days when December looms overhead with muffled enthusiasm, like a sheepish lover offering his sweet a charming gift, saying, "I'm home, did you miss me?"

And betwixt the months of autumn decay, winding down its days like a path unfolding, a flower unfurling with age and wisdom, there was a pleasant calm overhead and it lifted the spirits with a deafening sense of overwhelming happiness. It was strange and pleasant, familiar like an embrace and the centuries-old kiss of two seasons.

And Winter followed Autumn in its seasonal dance.

**\*\*4. Omegaverse\* (Warning: Strange content up ahead; read A/N at the bottom)\*\***

They weren't really what many people would call a conventional couple—but really—

Ice blue eyes narrowed and a feral growl escaped his lips, then upturning in satisfaction when the other male backed down and went off the other way.

—Jack snarling at every Alpha that happened to look their way was getting a bit too much.

"Do you have to do that?" Hiccup hissed. Jack whined but it would take a lot more than those sad eyes to shake the irritation off this time.

"I can't help it!" Okay, maybe the little pout on his lips did manage to ease some of the angerâ€¦ "You're in heat and those other guys were eyeballing you like a piece of meat."

And they probably were eyeing Hiccup H. Haddock the Third like a piece of meatâ€¦ a piece of baby-making meat.

Like it was tough enough being an Omega born from a powerful Alphaâ€¦ but his grandparents were Betas, so it wasn't that much of a surprise. But an Omega with a hormone-detecting deficiency? That was the real kicker.

Doctor Gothi said (or signed) that it wasn't serious per se. Hiccup just had a harder time picking out the hormone signatures of others and his cycles were off. And that was perfectly fineâ€¦ until he realized he couldn't even detect his own. So in short, he was a walking disaster ever since puberty hit, going into heat in unpredictable and undetected cycles (unless his dad got a good whiff of him before he left school), warranting him the unwanted attention of many beef-brained Alphas and a few brave (yet also beef-brained) Betas.

Oh the joys of middle schoolâ€¦

He never felt any symptoms but a unease during the worst of his heats and the need to be coddled here and there, but after a few check-ups from Gothi, he was deemed as perfectly healthyâ€¦ and perfectly fertile. Great.

And in truth, it should have been. He had the best of both worldsâ€”he was a high-ordered Omega with good lineage, good genes (the hormone-detection thing was found to be a spontaneous mutation), good health (though he always was on the skinnier side), and little to none of the side-effects that came with being an Omega. Which usually involves some activation of some hormone or other around Alphas and high-ordered Betas. But wasn't it just his luck that he was actually born with a brain free from hormonal control?\_

A brain that told him he was worth more than just making babies and caring for his Alpha. A brain that refused to bow down to that deranged maniac his dad set him up with when he was thirteen just because they were judged compatible. A brain that was deemed brilliant by honest professors who behind his back said that it was such a shame to see talent wasted on an Omega who was doomed to become a homemaker. So he had to be smart about who he was going to mate. And it was around that time that he realized what he has is a blessing.

Had he been a slave to his hormones, he probably would have ended up marrying that psychotic Dagurâ€¦ but instead, he found Jack.

To Hiccup, he wasn't a high-ordered Alphaâ€”he was just Jack. Jack who treated him like a regular guy when they met, Jack who didn't freak out and just turned red when he first went into heat around him, Jack who was honest about who he was and was honest when he told Hiccup he liked him as more than a friend and more than an Omega.

And Jackâ€¦ who was currently frightening half the Alpha population in school with his glares and whatever else his hormones happened to do

to keep them away. Hiccup wasn't particularly interested. He just let Jack walk him to his next class.

"Never knew you got jealous so easily," the brunet taunted.

"Yeah, wellâ€|ever since we, uhm, bondedâ€|your smell's gotten a lot stronger," he replied with a nervous look in his eyes.

Hiccup blinked. "Really?"

Jack nodded. "Yeahâ€|it'sâ€|kind of distracting me tooâ€|"

Hiccup's eyes widened as he felt Jack's \_distraction\_ press against the curve of his ass.

"This would be a lot easier if you'd just let me mark youâ€|" he whispered with a seductive lilt.

Oh for the love ofâ€|"FOR THE LAST TIME JACK, I'M NOT LETTING YOU PEE ON ME!"

**\*\*5 & 6. Lonely Hearts\*\***

"\_Lonely soul in search for something new,\_

\_Maybe brunet, green eyes and crooked smiles\_

\_Tell me, won't you be mine? Could it be you?"\_

His heart pounded, terror raced through him as his feet hastened against the wet pavement. The midnight air chilled him to the boneâ€|but he had to keep running. Had to get away. He wasn't the fastest, no he certainly wasn't, but he was good at evading, good at weaving his way past the maze of houses to get him off his trail before he took the straight path to his actual destination.

He chanced a look back and was met with nothing but the gaping maw of darkness as streets lamps flickered under the heavy storm. Clothes wet and muddy, he trudged on. He had to get awayâ€|had to, had to, had to.

Why did this happen? When did this happen? How did this happen?

It was so innocent at firstâ€|"a small poem, nothing big. Okay, it was a bit of a big deal to him; no one had ever sent him something like that. He showed it to his best friend but the excitement died down after a week or so.

Then he started getting gifts.

They were small things: flowers, some candy, a few more poems with the same rhyme scheme, but the last oneâ€|"a little crystal heart. It seemed expensive and was absolutely cold to the touch, like someone had stuck it in a freezer for days before shoving it in his locker. He started getting a little scared receiving all the attention and bought a new lock with an alternate combination. He left a note, thanking the person but without a mention of returning herâ€|or hisâ€|interest. Besidesâ€|it was no secret to anyone that he finally got Astrid's attention.

Then things started disappearing.

It was his notebook at first, then a few of his sketches, a journal filled with a few personal ponderings. He thought he misplaced them before the next item went missing: his watch.

It wasn't bad enough that he lost something that his mother gave him a year before she passed away, but the red card sticking out of his locker surely added to the increasingly appalling circumstances.

"\_You've taken my time, so why don't I take yours?\_"

No, the fact that whoever this person was admitted to actually taking his watch wasn't what worried him. What worried him was the way it was worded.

"\_You've taken my time\_" \_it wasn't "You've taken \_up\_ my time\_" no this wasn't spontaneous; this didn't happen in a few weeks.

This took time.

The messages were back within a week with much more disturbing contents. This one was the last straw:

"\_You're a tease; playing hard-to-get are you?"

\_But you're worth the chase, so I'll wait a while, \_

\_So won't you make my simple wish come true?"

No it wasn't the poem that got him.

It was the photos of him sleeping half-naked in his bedroom attached to the back of the card that made all sorts of sirens go off in his head. Because these pictures weren't taken from his window. No, they were taken from \_inside\_ his room.

He remembered feeling dizzy, almost getting sick. It had to end, it had to end then.

He cried out in horror after reading what the pervert had scrawled under the last photo, dropping the paper as though it burned his skin.

"\_You look so tempting there, just asking to be touched. I've heard you moan some nights when you think you're alone and you're a teenage boy\_" "I understand that. But understand that it took so much not to just take you, hard and dry, listening that pretty little mouth of yours scream my name. But don't worry when the time comes, you'll definitely be screaming." \_

He went home to tell his father that night "the chief of the police department" of the break-in, the notes, the gifts, and the thefts. He thought it was a joke, a harmless prank after his things started disappearing and now "and now he prays it was all just a joke, please, please let it all be just a joke.

He came home to an empty house that night, right as thunder rumbled through the sky "a warning. The note on the fridge said he would be

patrolling until dawn. Said to lock the doors and alarm the house.

But Hiccup knew that wouldn't help one bit.

Rain started pouring. He searched his pockets for his phone, heartbeat steadily increasing in despairing tempo as his hands came up empty; how had that \_freak\_ taken it? Could it have been from when he changed into his gym clothes and left his phone in his backpack? Could it have been when some stranger accidentally knocked him down and fled to class after the bell rang? Could it had fallen out of his pocket when he collapsed against his best friend and started crying after he read that sick, \_sick\_ note?

The house phone was the last resort and all Hiccup had to do was dial three little numbers but before shaky fingers could even lift the receiverâ€

Blackness swallowed the whole house. It could be from the storm, it could be a busted fuse, it could be anything, but all security fell away when a crack of lightning illuminated a silhouette of a hooded figure at the kitchen window.

It was futile, he knew it and even the dial tone foreshadowed what could have been his fate if he stayed just a moment longer in that houseâ€dead.

He ran out the door, not bothering to lock up; whatever that sicko wanted, it wasn't in the house anymore.

He ranâ€ran to the only person close by that could help him, who would take him in, who said he'd do \_anything\_ for him.

When he finally reached the familiar door, he beat his fists desperately against the wood, like an animal begging to be let out of the rain. "Jack, Jack please, let me in!" Please, please, please, please, please he's coming, he'll catch me, pleasepleasepleasepleasepleaseâ€

There was the sound of a lock coming undone before the door swung open. "Hiccup! Ah, get in here! You're soaking wet." It wasn't one of Hiccup's manliest moments, but as soon as he saw the familiar face, he launched himself at his best friend, tumbling the two of them inside. He was trembling and he knew it. He felt cold, fear thrumming through his veins, but at least Jack was there. Jack, who held him close and stroked his hair as he cried against his shoulder, Jack, who was carrying him to the couch while murmuring soothing words to his quivering form.

"J-Jackâ€he was there, a-at the house. My dad wasn't home, he- he's out patrolling. The lights went out and the phone went dead when I tried to callâ€"

"Hiccup, Hiccup, it's okayâ€I'm here and I won't let anyone take you from me." He held the brunet to his chest, patiently cradling him. "Did you go to your neighbor's house first?"

"N-noâ€I-I was scared he was too close outsideâ€I-I just ranâ€"

"So no one knows you're here?"

"Y-yeahâ€¦I'm sorry, I don't want you to get wrapped up in this messâ€¦I-I'm sorryâ€¦"

"No, don't beâ€¦I'm always here for you." There might've been a feather-light kiss to his forehead at the declaration, but the brunet seemed too traumatized to notice.

"J-Jack? Can I call m-my dadâ€¦pleaseâ€¦he'll be worriedâ€¦"

"In a while. Why don't you calm down? I'll get you something to drink."

"Okayâ€¦okayâ€¦" No. Something wasn't right here. He was freaking out, terrified, scared to death. And Jack? He didn't seem fazed at all. "Iâ€¦uhm, sorry to disturb youâ€¦were you in the middle of taking a shower?"

"Hm?" was the call from the kitchen. "Why do you ask?" He came back into the living room, a glass of water in his hand.

"Your hairâ€¦it's wetâ€¦" Something like dread dropped like a stone in Hiccup's stomach as Jack plastered on a fake grin to his lips and nodded, handing him the chilly glass.

"Yeah. Scared me half-to-death when I heard pounding on my door."

"Is that how you got that scratch? Itâ€¦uhmâ€¦looks pretty bad." And fresh. Like something he could have gotten outside from sneaking around a few bushes.

"Oh, yeah? I guess I didn't see itâ€¦"

"You sh-should clean it upâ€¦before it gets infected."

"Why are you worrying about me at a time like this?" That was a good question; too bad the strange glint in Jack's eye heeded a cautioned reply instead of an honest interrogation.

"Because you're my best friend, Jackâ€¦I-I would never want anything to happen to youâ€¦" Hiccup was nearly in tears, betrayal stinging and fear causing him to hyperventilate. "Neverâ€¦"

"Hiccupâ€¦you spilled your water." And his friend was back to his side, scolding him like a petulant child, completely unaffected by how Hiccup inched away from him.

"I-I'm sorryâ€¦" But this was Jack, Jack who has been his best friend since middle school (and the word, time whispered in his mind), Jack who dated a new girl every month (and then he remembered that first damned line in that poemâ€¦"Lonely soul in search for something new"), and oh god, oh GOD, this had to be a joke, a cruel messed up joke, because this was Jack, Jack who chased the bullies away when they would tease Hiccup for his small size and somehow got them to leave him alone for good, Jack who held him close when his mom died, Jack who held his hand when his cat Toothless died of eating some poison, Jack who forcefully spoon-fed him soup, oatmeal, and whatever else could slither down his throat when he stopped



eating altogether after that horrible year, Jack who cried alongside him those lonely nights when the house was empty after his mom's laughter and Toothless's meows had died away from the place, Jack whoâ€|whoâ€|

Had a spare key to his houseâ€|Jack who moved as quiet as a ghostâ€|Jack who knew about that downstairs window that the alarm could never detect when opened.

"Hiccupâ€|you don't look so goodâ€|" And his hand was rubbing circles in his back, the other taking his glass away from him, leaving him defenseless as he choked on his own cries. "Maybe you should lie down?"

The sobs refused to be muffled, panic causing his mind to go into hysteria. But why should he worry? This was Jack. He chased the demons out of his life. His cousin, the deranged son of his dad's friend, the cruel old man down the street with the pet sheepâ€"after meeting Jack, they never bothered him again. Jack was always thereâ€"Jack was always there!

"Shhâ€|I just want to take care of you, okay?" Cool lips were pressed against his brow, moving down and caressing a freckled cheek. "That's all. I care about you, you know that." Cold kisses rained against his skin, one stopping at the corner of a gasping mouth. "I love you."

And then his lips crashed against the brunet's.

It wasn't gentle, it wasn't soft, it didn't make his heart swell with joy, it didn't cause his stomach to flutter with butterflies, it didn't make him feel loved.

It was painful, their teeth collided, he felt like he was losing oxygen, felt his whole body freeze, felt trapped and terrified as his best friend devoured his mouth like a predator, relishing the carnage of his prey.

Something was slipped into his throat and Hiccup realized just a few seconds too late that he should have fought back, should have wrenched away, should have ran, should have never befriended the lonely boy with the starlight-colored hair and cold blue eyes, shouldhavesouldhavesouldhaveâ€"

"Hushâ€|go to sleep, okay? Everything'll be fineâ€|" There was a cold nuzzle to his neck before Hiccup took one last gasp for air. "Don't worryâ€"because I love you." And then the darkness was back, swallowing him whole as his vision faded and grew murky at the corners, the whole room spinning in hues of black and blue like a bruise blotting against pale skin from secrets far too dark to tell and the last thought that drifted through his mind before Hiccup thought nothing more, saw nothing more was:

Were those yellow eyes watching them the whole time?

**\*\*7. Overprotective Dads (From my story, I'll See it When I Believe It)\*\*\***

Stoick spent a good deal of his life trying to protect his only son.

A furtive glance at Hiccup's open door revealed his teenage boy, lounging on his bed and talking animatedly on the phone. This was becoming more and more of a common sight. The man cleared his throat and knocked "purely out of courtesy.

"ah, hold on." Those green eyes were focused on him and the boy's father could only sigh.

"Food'll be done in a few minutes\_, \_Hikke."

There was a small smile on his face as he regarded his father. "Okay, Pappa." A quick goodbye was murmured and he hung up. "What's for dinner?"

"Icelandic cod. Now don't complain! Even Toothless enjoys it." His son rolled his eyes and made his way downstairs.

It was nice seeing his son smile more often. Even as a baby, Stoick had trouble making the fussy child so much as crack a grin. No, unfortunately Hiccup wailed every time Stoick took his own son in his arms... (though his wife assured him it was only due to the baby's uneasiness of heights) but even then, he promised to protect the little (then-crawling) disaster.

He was his son. And he loved him.

But one thing was bothering him|It began a little less than a month ago.

A knock on the door heralded the first of many little 'surprises' that invaded their little suburban home in Burgess. It had been roses then|

\_Iced \_roses.

Yes, they were beautiful all right. Perfectly preserved as a layer of what appeared to be frost coating each delicate petal, encasing it in eternal blue. Stoick took a careful look around but saw not a single soul out there on the neighborhood. He was about to leave them out there for the mistaken stranger to retrieve (after all, who would be sending \_roses\_ to this household?) when he caught sight of the small card attached to a fragile stem.

It read, "To my Frost Flower." Stoick snorted at that, turning the card over. Maybe he'll get an owner. What a cheesy line|

On the back, it read, "Yes, that means you Hiccup." That stopped the amusement altogether.

When he presented them to his son, if he had any doubts about the gift's intender then, they dispersed the moment his boy turned an unhealthy shade of red and shakily accepted the winter bouquet. Stoick entertained the thought of talking to Hiccup about it, but he didn't miss the way those green eyes lit up, or the slight upturn of his lips. No, Stoick decided to let the boy be.

But it soon progressed to phone calls in the dead of night (he could hear his son talking upstairs as he tried to sleep), presents here and there (stuffed animals, snow globes from various famed locations,

a glittering hourglass with golden grains of sand swirling insideâ€|and one time, a winter-themed Easter Egg) that were always placed at the front door, weekend nights out, and once, his \_whole\_ house littered withâ€|frost ferns.

In the shape of \_hearts\_.

Okay, well Stoick couldn't exactly pin that one on his sonâ€|or his son'sâ€|whatever that person is at this point. But still. He was the boy's father! Whoever was courting Hiccup should have at least had the guts to face him.

On the other hand, he outright blanched at the thought of his son dating. But after a long, long, long talk with Gobber on the phone, he had to admit that the man was rightâ€|to an extent. He did the right thing by not questioning it, but he should at least \_try\_ to get his son to open up to him.

So that night, he decided that he would cut the two's nightly conversation short and have a little heart-to-heart with Hiccup. With that decided, he put away the last of the "frost flowers" into the freezer (it was getting quite full of themâ€|) and watched as a little card fluttered to the ground.

He picked it up with a sigh, reading the name at the back with curiosity brimming; it was something that still bothered himâ€|

Who was this 'Jack' and how did he manage to steal his little boy's heart?

\* \* \*

><p>\*=Honestly, this AU cracks me up. Partially due to the different ways animals "mark" their mates. (Seriouslyâ€|no watersportsâ€|not for me) Also, watch out. I took Microbiology last fall and most of what I remember of genetics and stuff has been packed away in neat little Viking funerals and have been shipped out to sea.<p>

Also about the marking thingâ€|animals don't usually mark their mates because most animals choose different mates over a period of time. Although, some animals such as rodents and hippos have been known to scent mark their mates or potential mates like they do territory (i.e. through urination or through scent glands).

\*= Poems based on the villanelle by Wendy Cope "Lonely Hearts." No real connection to the Lonely Hearts Killer. Uhâ€|it's not cheating to have two in one, is it?

\*= Kind of based on a conversation I had with BabayBunny. I don't know. I thought it was cute.

-dies- I tried, yes?

End  
file.